

VZCZCXRO7535
PP RUEHPA
DE RUEHRY #0228/01 1131559
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 231559Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3627
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000228

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/23/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: PARTY LINE BEGINS TO EMERGE FROM GOG

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Over the past few weeks, Embassy officers have been hearing what appears to be an emerging "party line" from the Government of Guinea. CNDD loyalists and career civil servants alike are maintaining that the CNDD represents Guinea's best solution for the near-term, and that Dadis and his administration are doing what needs to be done to ready the country for an eventual transition, which is likely to take much longer than a year. Equally clear is the idea that elections are being imposed upon the country by an international community that does not fully appreciate Guinea's political realities. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Between the Charge's recent attendance at a diplomatic corps briefing given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Pol/Econ Chief's meetings with the Ministers of Labor and Justice and senior MFA officials, and the DATT's meeting with the Secretary General of Defense, it appears that the Government of Guinea is beginning to articulate a clear party line.

CNDD IS THE ANSWER TO GUINEA'S PROBLEMS

¶3. (C) Guinean Government officials maintain that the CNDD is doing exactly what needs to be done to get the country ready for its next government. There is a general consensus that the system needs to be "cleansed" in order to prevent corruption and weak governance in the future. This cleansing includes rewriting the constitution, recouping stolen funds, and stifling narco-trafficking. Government contacts argue that the military is the only institution capable of effectively addressing these long-standing issues. When questions of fundamental human rights issues, such as due process, are raised, officials respond with arguments about how the country's judicial system is endemically corrupt and therefore unreliable. While some may not agree with the methods, they do seem to accept the idea that these activities are necessary.

ELECTIONS ON OUR TERMS

¶4. (C) Support for the CNDD's agenda feeds into the GoG's views on elections. Everyone agrees that elections are the ultimate end goal, but many are increasingly adamant that Guinea will not be ready for elections this year. Some argue from a technical standpoint, saying that the process is already too far behind and there are too many steps ahead to be able to hold elections before the end of the year. Others argue that it would be catastrophic for Guinea to hold elections until the "cleansing" is complete. These officials are concerned that holding elections too soon would simply perpetuate the problems of the past.

15. (C) A visiting Italian student working on a dissertation focussing on the international community's response to the December 23 coup, said that a number of government officials told her that elections would not happen unless the international community coughs up the money to pay for them. She noted that one official said "if they want the elections so badly, then they can pay for them."

FOREIGNERS DON'T UNDERSTAND OUR REALITY

16. (C) When faced with direct statements of USG policy, Guinean officials respond with comments about how the international community does not really appreciate Guinea's complex political reality. They question how the USG, for example, can continue to condemn the coup and the CNDD when we were willing to work with the late President Conte's obviously corrupt, undemocratic regime. They argue that the country's only alternative after Conte's death was a coup. Further, they argue that without continued military intervention, the country will quickly descend into civil war.

A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE

17. (C) Another emerging theme is the belief that the USG condemned the coup as a matter of policy rather than because of an informed decision. Government officials have frequently described the USG's condemnation as "a matter of principle." They might joke and say "we understand that you

CONAKRY 00000228 002 OF 002

have to condemn us, but now we want to talk about how we can work together." Explanations to the contrary, focused on why the USG fundamentally believes that an illegitimate military junta is not in Guinea's best interests, seem to fall on deaf ears.

YOU'LL COME AROUND EVENTUALLY

18. (C) The last and perhaps most troublesome theme is the idea that members of the international community will eventually soften their policies towards the military junta. Government officials have repeatedly noted the suffering of the Guinean people and pleaded for assistance. They acknowledge the USG's suspension of aid, but in the next breath, ask for money for one program after another. Body language and comments suggest that government officials have not really internalized the USG's message. They hear what we are saying, but still seem to believe that we will eventually have no choice but to offer the hand of assistance. Officials are still talking about when, not if, the World Bank's debt relief program for Guinea is approved.

COMMENT

19. (C) The GoG's emerging "party line" suggests that there is increasing support for the CNDD and its agenda among even career civil servants. This party line also suggests that elections are not an immediate priority. At the same time, there seems to be a belief that the GoG can pursue its own agenda on its own timeline, and that the international community will eventually get on board. Despite repeated statements in the press, at public events, and in private meetings, our message does not seem to be getting through. Embassy will continue to underscore and explain USG policy in an attempt to change some of these misguided impressions.
END COMMENT.
RASPOLIC